



Policy No. 114

Self-Determination and System Reform

Adopted: July 16, 1999

The Developmental Disability Council supports self-determination for all people with developmental disabilities.

Self-determination includes, but is not limited to, a personal centered focus, real and comparable choices, control over financial and other resources, ways to determine satisfaction, access to the local community, and self-advocacy.

A person's services and supports must ultimately promote independence, productivity, integration and inclusion into the local community and reflect principles of self-determination.

Therefore, system reform proposals must also reflect principles of self-determination.

To the Developmental Disabilities Council this means that system reform proposals must:

Be Person Centered:

Proposals must place the individual with a developmental disability at the center and include planning mechanisms that focus on the person.

If the family is involved, e.g. the person with a developmental disability is under age 18, the proposal must respect and support the family and acknowledge the unique strengths/needs of the family.

Proposals must assure that the person with the developmental disability is in the decision-making role to the maximum extent possible.

Include Real and Comparable Choices:

Proposals must set out real choices and service options that assist the person in meeting his/her own individual plan.

Proposals must assure that decisions about the choices are made with the full knowledge of the decision-maker.

Proposals shall include protections for individuals and a description of how they can exercise those protections.

Proposals shall include a means to enhance informed decision making to those considering the service or support.

Place Individual in Control of Recourses:

Proposals must include user friendly ways to place control over resources, including financial, in the hand of the individual decision-maker.

Proposals must include necessary safeguards to help the person determine how well the purchased service or support is helping the individual reach the goals of his/her own person-centered plan.

Ways to Determine Satisfaction:

Proposals must include mechanisms to determine individual satisfaction and feed this information back to providers and system administrators.

Proposals must include tools for people to change services and/or providers when he/she is dissatisfied.

Proposals must outline individual protections and how the person can exercise those protections.

Community Involvement:

Proposals shall address how individuals with developmental disabilities access community services, including but not limited to, housing, transportation, public facilities, and public services.

Proposals shall address how individuals with developmental disabilities are active in their local communities and how communities can engage in strategies to become more inclusive and integrated.

Be Culturally Competent:

Proposals shall assure that services and supports are provided in a language understandable to the individual with a developmental disability and are culturally relevant in terms of commitment, availability, accessibility and appropriateness.

Provide Transitions:

Proposals must recognize the life-long nature of the disability and accommodate easy movement when a person reaches change-moments during the life span.

Include Sound Management Practices:

If system reform proposals are adopting “managed care principles” or modification thereof, they must address how they are going to be fairly and equitably applied in such areas as:

- Individual Resource Management/Community Guides
- Education Awareness and Information Sharing
- Personal Assistance Services
- Outreach and Prevention Strategies
- Eligibility and Service-level Determination
- Rate Determination
- Safety Net
- Special Needs and Those Facing Challenging Situations

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